

LIVING DURING HISTORIC TIMES

WE ARE LIVING IN MOMENTOUS TIMES IN THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY. 250 YEARS AS A NATION. The RE-DEDICATION TO “ONE NATION UNDER GOD” ON MAY 17. WHAT A TIME TO BE ALIVE!

THINGS WE HAVE SPENT MOST OF OUR LIVES PRAYING FOR ARE COMING TO PASS - Overturning of Roe vs Wade; Many in the current administration are believers; a re-shifting toward Christian values. Not shifting toward a Christian Nation, but a God-fearing one.

- ***THIS THURSDAY IS THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER- MAY 7. NOON AT COURTHOUSE, 6 PM AT CHURCH ON THE HILL.***
- ***OUR CELEBRATION IN MCMINNVILLE OF 250TH BIRTHDAY ON JULY 5 UNDER THE TENT - ALSO 150TH OF MCMINNVILLE***
- ***HOW MUCH DOES OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD IMPACT THE OUTCOMES OF PIVOTAL HISTORIC MOMENTS?***

A LOT! WHAT YOU DO MATTERS TO WORLD EVENTS!

I. CHARACTER-DEFINING MOMENTS IN HISTORY

- A. MORDECAI TO ESTHER** - *Her actions rescued her people at risk of her own life. **She overcame the fear for her safety and comfort.***

Esth. 4:14 *For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. **Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?***

- B. JOSEPH TO HIS BROTHERS** - *His decision to show mercy to his brothers, rescued his people from starvation. **He overcame his anger and offense and let go of his need for vengeance.***

Gen. 50:20 *But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, **in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.***

- C. DAVID TO GOLIATH** - *His bold and dangerous action helped defeat the armies of the Philistines. He didn’t let criticism stop him. **He placed***

himself in danger because he stood for the Lord's cause.

1Sam. 17:46 *This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.*

- **WHEN WE PRAY AND WHEN WE ACT, IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO WHAT GOD WILL DO. BUT, OUR DECISIONS DO NOT LIMIT HIM.**
- **WHEN WE FAIL TO PARTICIPATE IN HIS PURPOSE, HE SIMPLY ACCOMPLISHES HIS WILL ANOTHER WAY .**
- **YET, IT MAY NOT BE IN OUR LIFETIME. WE MIGHT MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE PART OF IT. IN HIS LOVE, HE WILL NOT BURDEN US WITH LIVING IN HISTORIC TIMES THAT OUR CHARACTER CANNOT SUSTAIN.**
- **PRAY! PRAY! PRAY! AND THEN ACT.**
What is it that causes us to respond to adversity in ways that restore our hearts and then lead us on to maturity and grace?
- **OUR HEART CALLS US TO ACTION EVEN WHEN THE REST OF US SAYS, "LET'S JUST WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS".**
- **WHAT WILL WE DO IN THESE HISTORIC TIMES?**
- **ARE YOU STRENGTHENING YOUR CHARACTER FOR THESE HISTORIC TIMES WE ARE LIVING IN?**

II. THE REFINER'S FIRE

Psa. 66:10 *For You, O God, have tested us;
You have refined us as silver is refined. - **CHARACTER IS PROOF OF WHO WE REALLY ARE***

Prov. 17:3 *The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
But the **LORD tests the hearts.** - **COURAGE COMES OUT OF THE FIRE***

Is. 48:10 *Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tested you in the **furnace of affliction.** - **OPPOSITION TESTS US***

Prov. 27:21 *The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
And a man is valued by what others say of him. - REJECTION TESTS US*

A. WHAT IS FORGED IN THE FIRE OF OUR TESTING?

1. **COURAGE** - To be willing to stand alone, even when no one will stand with you. Over-comers are made in the fire of affliction not in the refuge of comfort and safety.
2. **TRUST** - When you can't see the way forward, all you have is trust. We cannot see the Covenant. But we know who God says He is, and we believe He is the One who keeps His word.
3. **HUMILITY** - Humility is to truly see ourselves for who we are before God.

Ps 51 - "Take not your Holy Spirit from me"

2Chronicles 7:14 - "If my People, who are called by my name..."

Isaiah 61:1-4 - "Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for spirit of heaviness - trees of righteousness"

4. **FAITHFULNESS** - To be true even when no one sees that you are true.
5. **LOVE** - Choosing to give of yourself for others when it costs you more than you want to pay. Forgiveness, service, honor and sacrifice
6. **SACRIFICE** - Take responsibility and transform loss into redemption through generosity of spirit. *Esther, Joseph and David all sacrificed their own comfort, justice and safety to shift outcomes for everyone else.*
7. **SUFFERING** - Endurance grows out of the pain we don't allow to define or limit us. Strength and endurance are the conquest of self-pity in our life.
 - **JOB** - *Protective hedges and safety can get in the way of what God is doing in our life. Promotion. Evidence. Revelation. Humility*
8. **ABUNDANCE** - **Contentment is the secret to abundance.** When we live for the benefit of others we become a resource to release the riches of Christ.

Phil 4:11 ... for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² **I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.** ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

B. THE STRENGTH OF OUR CHARACTER GROWS IN ADVERSITY, UNCERTAINTY AND OPPOSITION

1. **DIFFICULT TIMES ARE NOT PUNISHMENT. THEY ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO STEP TOWARD SOMETHING GREATER IN YOUR LIFE.**
2. **HISTORIC TIMES ARE A CODE WORD FOR TUMULTUOUS TIMES. DON'T BE LULLED INTO COMPLACENCY BY COMFORT OR ENTERTAINMENT. ASSIGNMENTS AND COMMISSIONS FROM HEAVEN ARE BEING SENT OUT EVEN AS WE SPEAK.**
3. **BECOME THE PERSON THAT STEPS INTO THAT MOMENT OF HISTORY THAT CHANGES THE DIRECTION OF WORLD EVENTS.**

III. RESPONDING TO HIS GRACE IN OUR TESTING DEVELOPS OUR CHARACTER AND PREPARES US FOR TAKING OUR POSITION IN HIS DIVINE PURPOSE.

“AS IN HEAVEN, SO ON EARTH”